

**Lucía Warck-Meister is an artist who works adroitly with the following materials: glass, silicon, glue guns, plastic of all kinds, color, light, violence, destruction, love, and rage. She is originally from Buenos Aires, but for the last three years has split her time between there and New York City. I chose to interview Warck-Meister because I wanted her to communicate, in her own words, the artistic forces that propel her to make works that are at once poetic musings, paintings, drawings, sculptures, and installations. This interview was conducted via e-mail from January to March 2001.**

Amy Cappellazzo: The spider web is an important, recurring, almost archetypal form in your work. It has both positive connotations and negative connotations. What drew you to the form and what are your feelings about the way they are culturally read?

Lucía Warck - Meister: The spider web is a metaphor for the fragility of life, of being. Spider webs are built very carefully, thoroughly. They appear very fragile while being strong, but when destroyed they are immediately rebuilt. This reconstruction is what interests me in particular. There is a drive towards construction and at the same time to destruction, both are very human.

I find spider webs very sensual but also a trap. I intend to arouse in the viewer the sense of attraction and rejection with my work. This feeling is the most common among all of us; life, death, love, our deepest fears.

AC: It is interesting that your works that use text are also made to resemble webs. How did you arrive at this?

LWM: I see language as an expanding web. Associations with words semantically or phonetically have many different ways to grow and connect one to the other. We build with words and we destroy with words. Consciously or not we are influenced by other's gazes. The words, which are sometimes entwined in the web, indicate that language is also complex, infinite and at the same time labile and slippery. Sometimes the text can not be read unless you make the effort to penetrate deeper into the work. The desire to know goes from the superficial to the profound. But what I find interesting is that in my work what is on the surface (superficial) is the real, the transparent or dark material and where the text can be read more easily is in the background, in the shadows.

AC: Yes, this is true about your work. The text can be quite elusive, as if one is speaking but cannot fully be heard. You speak often about the paradigm of constructing and destroying. Naturally they are both life forces, but why do these two polar actions figure so prominently in your process and in your work?

LWM: I've always been strongly attracted by situations of pleasure and pain. The clash of these opposites creates an unstable environment of giddiness or vertigo. I like to go from one extreme to the other, exploring the in between. When I think I have reached the desired object, I try to destroy it and move to the next creation. It is not that I am fearless, it's that I enjoy this impossibility of maintaining equilibrium. Sometimes I feel that I am in a kind of labyrinth and I go through the corridors until I find the way out. When I do, I am tempted to enter again. And the labyrinth is infinite because it is in our minds.

AC: Speaking of labyrinths, your new box works feel like labyrinths of text and broken objects — maybe like Joseph Cornell on a violent bender. How did you arrive at these forms for your new work?

LWM: When I was working with the glue gun I had the idea and the urge to build a very big labyrinth which you can walk into. The walls of the labyrinth are spider-webs entwined with a short text that says, "Come with me," inviting you to enter an unknown place. This work took me a very long time to make but when you face something you are denying, the best way is to put it outside in order to see it more clearly. In fact, what I realized was most important was the process of construction. The blurred effect is what I wanted to keep in the spirit of the box works. And I have written all over the box. Sometimes you understand what is written, sometimes not.

In Cornell's boxes you have to look inside the box to discover the scene. What I intend to do with my boxes is to prevent you from getting closer to the scene. That's why the broken objects are behind a blurred acrylic. The text on the box is a second barrier. Like in the labyrinth you have to try some other path to get to the center.

I wanted to have the broken glass isolated. I see the box as a structure and a form to control. I try to restrain the inner violence.

AC: Do you see your works as documents of a performance of a violent act?

LWM: Yes, it begins when I go to stores and look for the objects I'm going to destroy once in my studio. Some of them don't break easily and I have to persist in beating them. There is a very disturbing feel-

ing of a growing violence. Sometimes I have to stop because I can't bear it.

AC: And the result of the destruction is used in your work in form, or do you feel the need to retool or reconfigure the destroyed elements?

LWM: To reconfigure is important to me. I destroy the objects and I use what is left, the broken pieces. Sometimes the object changes its form completely, it is more aggressive, always sharp edges, as if it were prepared to attack or defend. Other times it still resembles what it was, but you notice it has been battered, it shows the wound.

AC: The boxes were a whole new direction for you. What do you suppose will be next for you?

LWM: When you are working you often find many different paths to follow, but you can't take all of them at the same time. Only the ones that I find interesting I try to investigate. Sometimes you leave that path for the future. What I can tell you is about a future project I have in mind. I take the objects out of the boxes and hang them from the ceiling. The vessels are all upside down and many of them are broken. It will look like a sensual but also frightening blue sky. You will be able to walk beneath this fragmented sky. I would like to expand the feeling of instability to a whole space. I would like to have shadows moving down to the floor. On this occasion we participate with what surrounds us. We are not foreign to what is happening. We are not outsiders. We are included in an environment of contradictory sensations.

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